WWW.STAPLES.COM

# Staples Online Takes Supply-Shopping to the Next Level

Staples' elegant Web site makes it so simple and fun to shop for computer accessories, software, and office supplies that you may opt for the company's cyber-store over its brick-and-mortar branch—even if the latter's just down the block. Staples' e-store couples the convenience of at-work or at-home shopping with the massive array of products that the terra firma Staples stores provide.

Myriad time-saving features expedite your hunt for office supplies. These include personalized lists of items you regularly buy, e-mail reminders, and the ability to review your purchase history.

The online catalog offers more than a dozen

desktop and notebook computers, as well as handheld PCs, printers, and a bevy of peripherals and software. When you're looking for necessities such as printer ink, toner, fax paper, or even typewriter ribbons, the site's product-matchmaker feature calls up and displays accessories compatible with your equipment. If you're in a browsing mood, you can stroll the virtual aisles of this massive inventory with ease because it's arranged in intuitive categories such as phones/communication, janitorial/breakroom, furniture, and binders/filing. If you know just what you want, search the catalog by keyword, brand, or item number. You may elect to see search results with or without product pictures.

Office managers can streamline orders by creating group accounts that let associates select the products they need. These requests may be approved later by a manager before shipment. Another unique feature is the ability to "mark your favorite aisles"—tell the site what types of products you usually buy, and it will create a personalized menu so you can find what you need quickly.

Another lure: If you live less than 30 miles from a Staples store and order more than $50 of products, your order will be delivered the next day for free. Orders placed outside of local trading areas are shipped via UPS.

The Staples Web store includes an informative FAQ to answer any queries about order tracking, delivery, returns, and more. If you cannot find the answer you need in the FAQ, there are a variety of e-mail links for customer service. ▼

COMPILED BY KEVIN SAVETZ AND PEACE GARDINER

## PC Shopping Sites

The sites in this listing sell products from multiple manufacturers. See *Computer Shopper*'s Source Directory for more information on PC manufacturers offering only their own brand (such as Dell or Gateway).

Aberdeen

**Aberdeen**.....**www.aberdeeninc.com**
Deep discounts and extensive technical information on computer hardware.
**Features** • new products added monthly • easy-to-use system configurator • multimedia and networking supplies
**Caveat** • tiny software selection only offers one brand

**Access Micro**.....**www.accessmicro.com**
When browsing the selection of merchandise at Access Micro, don't forget to check out the great weekly deals. With 45,000 items ranging from memory to T1 routers available, shoppers will enjoy perusing the variety at this searchable site. The help desk and hardware guide provide aid to first-time visitors.
**Features** • online order tracking • government and educational discounts • international orders are welcome

**Aiyamicro**.....**www.aiyamicro.com**
Aiyamicro sells PC systems, parts, and peripherals. Whether you're shopping for a custom laptop, a peripheral, software, or even a complete computer system, custom quotes are available within one day. You can browse by category—CPUs, backup devices, monitors, and so on. Aiyamicro also offers buyers a variety of software ranging from Windows NT server software to children's titles.
**Features** • message boards and chat sessions • online customer service and technical support • links to manufacturers' sites
**Caveat** • no product-search function

**Anything**.....**www.anythinginc.net**
You can find almost everything at Anything: PC, Mac, and Unix products. Tell the site what platform you're interested in, and it displays a catalog of available hardware, software, and accessories for that system. Anything offers handy search features and is less cluttered than most sites, making it easy to find the products you need.
**Features** • offers Microsoft Open License software • 170,000 products • most U.S. deliveries within 72 hours

**Applied Computer**.....**www.applied-computer.com**
Applied Computer offers free online purchasing consultation, and will match or beat any advertised price. The handy RAM reference feature will help you determine what type of memory your PC needs, as well as whether it's in stock.
**Features** • more than 300,000 products • RAM reference simplifies upgrades • training classes are available

**AtomicPC**.....**www.atomicpc.com**
Buy computer equipment and help save the world in one fell swoop. AtomicPC is a unique online store with the mission of funding charities involved in the preservation of the planet and humankind. The AtomicPC site offers 35,000 products, including computer hardware, software, and accessories, with about half of the listed items available for immediate shipping.
**Features** • portion of proceeds go to environmental, health, and social charities • can verify that any item is in stock • self-study training books and videos available

Audible

**Audible**.....**www.audible.com**
What happens when you take the common book-on-tape and transform it with the Internet? You get Audible, a unique way to educate and entertain yourself. Buy and download audio programs, such as *The Wall Street Journal* or best-selling books. Then hear the programs on your computer system, or use a portable player to listen in the car or while jogging.
**Features** • download fiction and nonfiction books • RealAudio files for PC or portable player • free programs available

Black Box

**Black Box** ..... **www.blackbox.com**
Specializes in cabling and network-connectivity products.
**Features** • detailed, 900-page downloadable catalog • order online or request a quote • warehouse-clearance specials
**Caveat** • Can't browse catalog online

**BuyComp.com** ..... **www.buycomp.com**
BuyComp is devoted to computer hardware, including systems, PDAs, peripherals, and networks. This elaborate site is part of an army of e-commerce sites, including BuySoft for software, BuyBooks, BuyVideos, and BuyGames. You can jump between stores in a flash, plunking disparate products into your virtual shopping cart for bundled delivery.
**Features** • powerful product-search tools • lease option on all systems • huge selection of DVDs

**Buy Now** ..... **www.buynowcomputers.com**
Shopping for a PC is easy at Buy Now, especially for those who know exactly what they want. Buy Now carries top PC brands, Apple Computer products, and custom systems. The easiest way to search this site is by manufacturer part number.
**Features** • more than 30,000 in-stock items • customer service available via e-mail • same-day shipping

**Cables To Go** ..... **www.ctghub.com**
Cables To Go sells every conceivable cable and adapter your PC might need, from standard SCSI to esoteric system-specific cables.

**CDW** ..... **www.cdw.com**
CDW offers an impressive array of hardware and software. If you're buying a new PC, a PDA, a monitor, a modem, a digital camera, or a printer, the site's CDW Compare tool shines. Choose up to five products you are considering, and it will display side-by-side comparisons of them, including their photos, specs, prices, and warranties.
**Features** • in-stock items are clearly marked • list of available rebates • can browse just products with manufacturer rebates

**Chili Pepper Computer** ..... **www.chilipepperpc.com**
Shoppers can explore the large selection of hardware and software available at Chili Pepper Computers by searching by keyword or manufacturer part number. The funny and informative "about us" section gives users an opportunity to learn about the economics of buying and selling on the Internet. Customer service and technical support are available via e-mail.
**Features** • hard-to-find motherboards • in-stock items easily identified • networking equipment

**ClubComputer** ..... **www.clubcomputer.com**
This site sells custom-built PCs, computer furniture, and a wide variety of peripherals and accessories. Every item has two prices: a regular price and a member price.

**CNET Shopper.com** ..... **cnet.shopper.com**
CNET's Shopper.com, a computer product and pricing search engine, takes the guesswork out of finding a deal on hardware, software, and accessories. Tell it what you're seeking, and the site quickly serves up a list of online stores that sell the item—along with its cost at each store, sorted by price. The site tracks the prices of more than 100,000 products. The database is updated daily.
**Features** • locates the best price among 100 online stores • gives approximate shipping cost and number of units in stock (for some items) • provides phone numbers and links to each store

**CompUSA Online** ..... **www.compusa.com**
If you happen to live out of range of CompUSA's 200 stores nationwide, or if you prefer to do your buying research or shopping online, visit the superstore's Web site. The site is as impressive as the company's retail stores, offering a veritable cornucopia of PC products, accessories, and software.
**Features** • deals on clearance, demo, refurbished, and opened-box items • Apple products • driver-software archive

**CompuPlus Computer Centres** ..... **www.compuplus.ab.ca**
Customer service and customization are the top selling points.
**Features** • variety of options for system configurations • quotations are handled by a real salesperson • price quotes in U.S. and Canadian currencies • complete systems available with or without an operating system
**Caveat** • price quotes provided via e-mail

**Comp-U-Plus Direct** ..... **www.compuplus.com**
Offering an assortment of PC hardware, Comp-U-Plus highlights its customer service, offering a 30-day money-back-guarantee policy with no restocking fee. In addition, the company offers free technical support. The site's database of support FAQs offers answers to hundreds of questions. Its online catalog isn't the biggest, but plenty of name brands are represented, and prices are reasonable.
Features • online order tracking • large close-out section
Caveat • no search engine

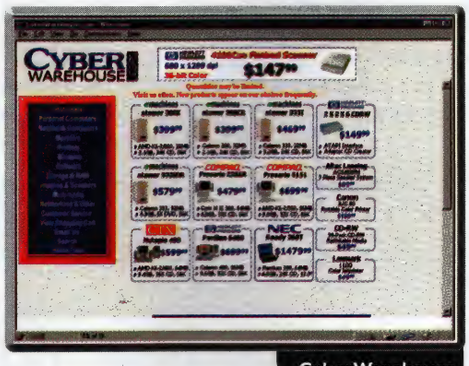
**computercomputer.com** ..... **www.computercomputer.com**
Interested in buying components and piecing together your own custom PC? The Web site for computercomputer.com sells bare-bones systems that'll make a good starting point. It also offers plenty of complete systems. These come with technical support via telephone and a one-year onsite warranty. The site's affiliated software link carries more than 100,000 titles. Quotes on custom systems are available online or via telephone.
**Features** • online system configurator • bare-bones systems for do-it-yourself fun • modems and networking supplies

**Computer Literacy Bookshops** ..... **www.clbooks.com**
A bookstore devoted to computer books, training manuals, documentation, and research reports.

**Computer Quick** ..... **www.cqk.com**
Offers plain-box, best-buy, and close-out merchandise in addition to a selection of more than 73,000 items in regular stock.

**Computers4Sure** ..... **www.computers4sure.com**
Fifteen diverse departments offer a wide range of products from networking equipment and peripherals to PDAs and scanners. Computers4Sure has top brands and more than 30,000 products. Shoppers can keep tabs on their spending with the Shopping Cart subtotal, which is always onscreen.
**Features** • can power-search for a specific product • daily and blue-light specials • hundreds of software titles

**computershopper.com** ..... **computershopper.com**
*Computer Shopper*'s own computer-buying site on ZDNet offers the choice of buying hardware and software products (new, overstocked, and refurbished) by phone, through a secure connection, or via links to vendor Web sites. It also provides access to reviews from all ZD publications, interactive guides to choosing a desktop or a notebook, and How to Buy sections on the most popular product categories.
**Features** • thousands of products from more than 120 vendors • side-by-side comparisons of the listings that interest you most • daily and weekly advice on new products and good deals



CyberWarehouse

**CyberWarehouse** ..... **www.cyberwarehouse.com**
A discount outlet offering PCs, monitors, modems, printers, other peripherals, and software.
**Features** • can see whether product is new, refurbished, and so on • all items include warranty • "What's New, What's Hot" newsletter
**Caveat** • may take up to five days to ship

**Dalco Electronics** ..... **www.dalco.com**
Offers a wide array of system accessories and custom-built cables.
**Features** • overnight shipping • free product support • excellent return policy

**Damark**.....www.damark.com
Offers low prices on new but discontinued computer systems from Acer, Fujitsu, Packard Bell, and other manufacturers.

**Dirt Cheap Drives**.....www.dirtcheapdrives.com
Offers a wide variety of storage hardware, media, and related accessories.
**Features** • Internet Specials page offers deals and close-outs • detailed archive of technical-support information • quantity discounts available
**Caveat** • buyers must call to find out shipping charges

**Electrified Discounters**.....electrified.com
Specializes in products that are discontinued, refurbished, off-lease, or otherwise not state of the art.
**Features** • 30-day guarantee on all items • Se habla español
**Caveat** • minimum order is $50, $100 for credit-card orders

Electronics Boutique

**Electronics Boutique**.....www.ebworld.com
Game software for your PC and your Mac, as well as titles for the PlayStation, Nintendo 64, and other game consoles.
**Features** • new releases and hot products • can search for age-appropriate games • lists release dates for new game titles

**Firstsource.com**.....www.firstsource.com
Offers 110,000 computer-related products and an easy-to-use order-tracking system.
**Features** • e-mail alerts for product specials

**Global Mart**.....www.globe-mart.com
Global Mart's computer area is well-organized, so shoppers can zoom right to the product category they want, whether it's video splitters, flat-panel displays, digital cameras, or multifunction printers. The great selection here includes handheld PCs and UPS backup systems. This Web shop also has a software affiliate with 100,000 titles.
**Features** • selection of factory-serviced PC values • monthly product specials • electronics and tools available

**HardwareStreet.com**.....www.hardwarestreet.com
Shoppers in the market for hardware, software, and networking products can choose from more than 39,000 products at HardwareStreet. In addition, 1 percent of all profits go to the National Forest Foundation, so you can help the environment while getting the merchandise you need. Affiliated sites DownloadDrive.com and SoftwareStreet.com offer thousands of software choices.
**Features** • 1,100 brands offered • free newsletter • great selection of digital cameras

**iDot.com**.....www.idot.com
Preconfigured or custom-built PCs. Each machine comes with a one-year onsite warranty—upgradable to three years.
**Features** • onsite-service warranty for all systems • technical support by phone, e-mail, and Web • equipment leases available

**Insight Enterprises**.....www.insight.com
Insight specializes in hardware and software. Peripherals abound—if you need a new modem, a keyboard, or a printer, Insight's well-organized category list will put copious choices in reach. You can order a preconfigured computer with just a few clicks or use the site's Configurator to customize the machine of your dreams. The search engine is better than most, letting you limit your system search based on price.
**Features** • can find out immediately if a product is in stock • free newsletters featuring tech news, closeouts, and new products • separate sites for the United States, Canada, Germany, and the United Kingdom

J and R Computer World

**J and R Computer World**.....www.jandr.com
PC and Mac users can find merchandise at this diverse site. Whether you're shopping for an IBM Aptiva or an Apple iMac, hardware and accessories for you abound at J and R, making this a one-stop shop for many. Shoppers will also enjoy the complete selection of office, educational, and gaming software.
**Features** • 24-hour customer service • DVD-ROMs • home video-game systems
**Caveat** • shipping charges not calculated online

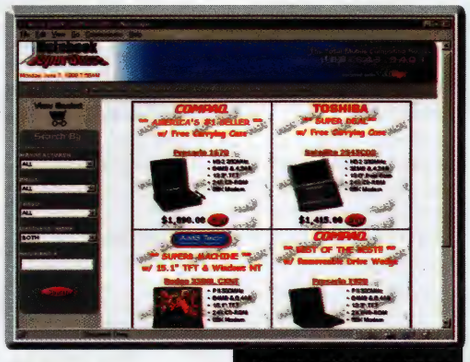
**MacNet**.....www.applemacnet.com
A reseller of Apple, PC, and other computer systems, as well as peripherals and software.

**McGlen Micro**.....www.mcglen.com
This online store offers more than 40,000 items, from desktop systems to digital cameras. Specialized searches for memory, supplies, and laptop upgrades can help you find items compatible with your computer, printer, and copier. McGlen Micro is fast, attractive, and easy to use.
**Features** • shortcuts to high-traffic areas of the site • can find compatible memory for your computer by specifying its make/model • real-time order tracking

**MicroWarehouse**.....www.warehouse.com
There's nothing "micro" about this gargantuan computer shopping site. There are actually four "warehouses" under this roof selling PC hardware and software, Mac products, networking components, and supplies. Once you've used the thorough descriptions provided to locate the products you need, the site guides you to compatible accessories.
**Features** • free gift with every order • 90,000 downloadable software titles • low-cost clearance rack

**Motherboard Superstore**.....www.mssi.com
Specializes in motherboards, CPUs, and other PC innards—a do-it-yourselfer's dream.
**Feature** • photo and complete specs for each motherboard
**Caveat** • 15 percent restocking fee on returned items

**NECX**.....www.necx.com
You won't have difficulty finding any sort of computer product here. The site offers all manner of hardware, software, and accessories. A separate arm of the site, the Outlet Center, serves up a constantly changing menu of discontinued, open-box, and refurbished products.
**Features** • Outlet Center offers special deals • customizable free newsletter



Notebook SuperStore

**Notebook SuperStore**.....www.notebooksuperstore.com
Devoted exclusively to portable computers, Notebook SuperStore offers approximately 70 different laptop models from 10 manufacturers.

**OfficeMax**.....www.officemax.com
You'll find computers, other business machines, office furniture, and even paper and pencils under this virtual roof.

**Outpost.com**.....www.outpost.com
Formerly dubbed Cyberian Outpost, this site bears no resemblance to its cold and desolate former namesake. Now simply Outpost.com, this lush site is home to hardware, software, and accessories. Take a peek at the top 10 PC or Mac products, then visit the Game Outpost to get your playtime fix. The OutpostAuctions area lets you bid against other visitors for hardware.
**Features** • can view site in 12 languages • 15 manufacturer-specific subsites, Broderbund to Viking • "PCs Under $1,000" specialty shop

**PC Mall**.....www.cc-inc.com
If you've checked your mail this month, chances are you've received at least one PC Mall catalog. Its thick, colorful catalog is chock-full of PC products. Its Web site is just as dense, home to systems, hardware, and software. Check the clearance rack for bottom-dollar deals.
**Features** • tremendous product selection for PCs and Macs • ProductPro wizard finds products that meet your specifications • uBid auctions let you set your own price

**PC Progress**.....www.pcprogress.com
With great prices on hard-to-find components and peripherals, PC Progress feels like a well-organized flea market.
**Features** • many hard-to-find computer products at bargain-basement prices • well-designed site makes it easy to browse for products

QualityClick.com

**QualityClick.com**.....www.qualityclick.com
This Web store covers all the basics for the home PC user. Shoppers will be pleased to see the shipping charges and warranty information before placing an order; expected time until shipping is also listed.
**Features** • DVD and video systems • weekly specials • a variety of customer-service and tech-support options

**Shopping.com**.....www.shopping.com
An enormous site offering everything from hardware and software to automotive products, luggage, cosmetics, and baby products at below list price.
**Features** • all items sold at less than list price • stock status shown for all products

**Sparco**.....www.sparco.com
Sparco makes shopping for computer equipment simple, especially for anyone in the market for a specific product. Its catalog of more than 83,000 products can be viewed by category or manufacturer, or searched by part number. Inventory numbers are updated daily.
**Features** • will meet or beat others' prices • downloadable catalog for offline reading • 30-day money-back guarantee on most products

**Staples**.....www.staples.com
Featured site this month, See p. 124.

**State Street Direct**.....www.ssdonline.com
Offers PC hardware, peripherals, and accessories. You can view shipping cost and stock status before you place an order.

**TechShopper**.....www.techweb.com/shopper
Knowledge is power when you're choosing computer parts, and TechShopper may give you the knowledge you need. The site offers reviews, specifications, prices, comparisons, and ratings for thousands of computer products. These details can help you find the hardware and software that's right for you. And once you make a decision, you can buy your choice with just a mouse click (and some money).
**Features** • online shopping tips and articles • can sell your old computer in free classified ads • free weekly newsletter

TechStore

**TechStore**.....www.techstore.com
TechStore offers hardware in more than a dozen categories, ranging from CPU upgrades to storage devices. Additionally, the site offers a wide range of software: everything from Microsoft applications to the Mattel Interactive Winnie-the-Pooh. Overnight shipment is available, but TechStore's standard shipping will reach most destinations in the United States in 72 hours.
**Features** • competitive pricing • 30-day performance guarantee • 40,000 products

**TigerDirect**.....www.tigerdirect.com
This easy-to-navigate site offers custom-built computers, tested and shipped within 48 hours. Shoppers in the mood for an adventure can order a build-it-yourself custom PC kit. TigerDirect also has a complete selection of ready-made desktops, laptops, memory, peripherals, and software. The extensive customer care center offers a range of services from presale support to technical support for non-Tiger systems.
**Features** • technology guarantee provides low-cost upgrades • sign up for e-mail-only sales • Blowout Central offers great deals
**Caveat** • difficult to calculate shipping charges

**Used Computer Mall**.....www.usedcomputer.com
A marketplace for used computer equipment.
**Features** • lists computer shows, equipment auctions, and swap meets • index of nonprofit organizations accepting used-computer donations • can auction your own equipment
**Caveat** • cannot search classified ads

**WebShopper**.....www.webshopper.com
It's two, two, two sites in one! On the one hand, WebShopper is an online computer store with an impressive catalog of goodies for sale. On the other hand, it's a great place to research the products you're considering: The site includes product reviews and comparisons from *PC World, Home Office Computing,* and other magazines.
**Features** • may browse only award-winning products • select from eight free newsletters

**Zones.com**.....www.zones.com
Zones.com is the umbrella for two online stores, PC Zone and Mac Zone. Boasting an impressive product selection ranging from CPUs to books, the site will show you a picture of any item and its specifications, and tell you whether it is currently in stock. The auction area offers an opportunity to name your price for the products you want.
**Features** • 50,000 products • 100,000 downloadable software titles and images • printable rebate coupons

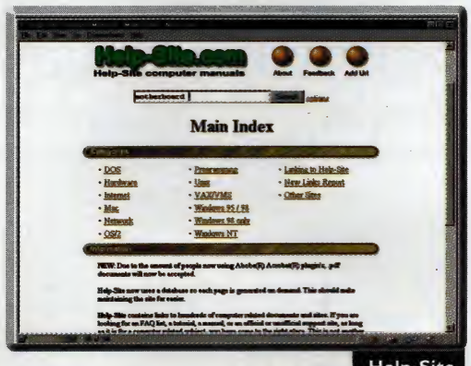
## PC Resources

**Center for the Study of Services**.....www.checkbook.org
A nonprofit consumer organization operated by the Center for the Study of Services that helps consumers get the best prices for products and services.

**eSmarts**.....www.esmarts.com
A collection of buying guides for Web shoppers that cover online computer sellers, electronics stores, auction sites, banks, and various other e-commerce categories.

**Federal Trade Commission**.....www.ftc.gov
Content covers the spectrum of consumer fraud and how to avoid it—online and off.

**56K Modem Central**.....www.56k.com
A before-you-buy primer on 56Kbps modems and the latest firmware upgrades.
**Features** • buyer's guide and reviews • trouble-shooting guide diagnoses common problems • buy or sell used modems with free classified ads



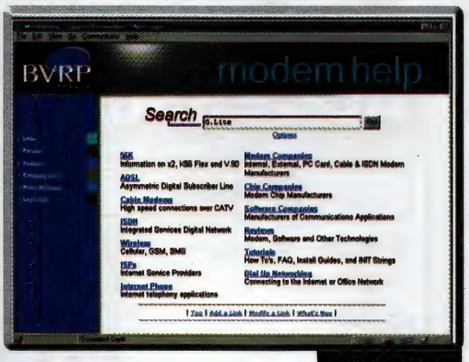
Help-Site

**Help-Site**.....help-site.com
Links to hundreds of computer-related documents and sites.
**Features** • noncommercial site • well-organized documentation • bad links are automatically noted

**Internet ScamBusters**.....www.scambusters.com
A Web site and newsletter that helps Net users avoid scams.
**Features** • lists the top five scams of 1998 • exposes tricks of e-mail spammers • free e-mail newsletter

SECTION CONTINUES ON PAGE 130

**ModemHelp** .....www.modemhelp.com
Technical support for modem users and a hearty list of links to other modem-related sites.
**Features** • free downloadable modem-diagnostic utility • info on ISDN, cable modems, ADSL, and 56Kbps modems • discussion forums for browsers, dial-up networking, and fax modems



ModemHelp

**National Fraud Information Center**.....www.fraud.org
Preventative medicine for those who want to avoid being bilked.
**Features** • online auction advice • Web credit-card safety tips • advice on avoiding telemarketing fraud

**PEP** ....microweb.com/pepsite/Recycle/recycle_index.html
A directory of state, national, and international agencies that facilitate donations of used computer hardware for schools and community groups.

**Product ReviewNet**.....www.productreviewnet.com
A collection of review abstracts for all sorts of products—including computers, appliances, sports equipment, and automobiles.

**Public Eye** .....www.thepubliceye.com
A customer-service rating site to help you find Internet businesses that deliver the best service—and avoid the ones that don't.
**Features** • certifies online merchants • information on protecting yourself against credit-card fraud • free access to customer-satisfaction database

**Universal Serial Bus** .....www.usb.org
Technical information about USB, answers to frequently asked questions, and information about devices that use the bus.

**WinDrivers.com** .....www.windrivers.com
A comprehensive archive of drivers and DLL files for hard drives, sound cards, and other hardware.
**Features** • daily computer news • can download utilities • can download service packs for Microsoft software

**Wireless LAN Answer Page**.....www.wirelesslan.com
Objective buying advice and an introductory tutorial to wireless local networking.
**Features** • introductory tutorial • links to other wireless LAN resources

**World O' Windows** .....www.conitech.com/windows
A collection of news, resources, and tips about current and future versions of Microsoft Windows.
**Features** • hundreds of downloadable hardware drivers • updates, patches, and resources for Microsoft Office • book reviews

## Software Sites

**Beyond.com**.....www.beyond.com
PC and Mac software shoppers can browse by category or search by name to track down titles. You'll find everything from reference tools to games.

**Bookmark Software** .....bookmarksoftware.com
Application categories for PCs and Macs include word processing, database, utility, and reference. The "home store" features education, hobby, and game titles.

**Buyonet**.....www.buyonet.com
Sells software—both traditional boxed programs and downloadable commercial software.

**Chumbo**.....www.chumbo.com
Chumbo's impressive software selection—arranged neatly into categories such as operating systems, connectivity, games, and kids' titles—will excite any computer user. Detailed information is available about every title. If you can't wait to try your new software and don't need a box, certain titles are available for immediate download. If you are anticipating the release of an upcoming program, Chumbo allows you to preorder software for shipment the day it is released.
**Features** • DVD movies available • special orders accepted • overnight, priority overnight, and standard shipping available
**Caveat** • 15 percent restocking fee on returned unopened items

**Download.com** .....www.download.com
A massive directory of shareware and freeware accompanied by down-to-earth reviews and well-written newsletters.

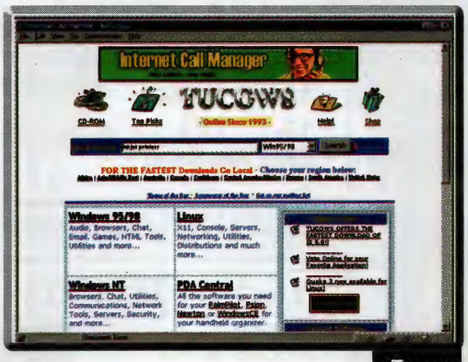
Download.com

**eBarn** .....www.ebarn.com
You can pay for, register, and download commercial software in a jiffy here.

**Jumbo**.....www.jumbo.com
Jumbo's Web site holds a monstrous file archive with programs for sale, as well as freeware, shareware, and thousands of commercial-application demos, so you can try before you buy.

**Palmtastik**.....www.palmtastik.com
Palmtastik does one thing and does it well: PalmPilot software. Offers freeware, shareware, and commercial software.

**Stroud's Winsock List**.....cws.internet.com
A one-stop download site for the latest and greatest in Internet software.
**Features** • lists the top 25 downloads • free e-mail summary of software updates • cool app of the week



Tucows

**Tucows**.....www.tucows.com
An incredible archive of freeware and shareware. Every program is rated on a scale from one to five cows.

## Financial Services

**American Century**.....www.americancentury.com
This site makes it simple to invest in more than 7,000 mutual funds.
**Features** • stock, bond, and option trading • retirement services • informative FAQ

**Bonds Online**.....www.bonds-online.com
Market information about tax-free municipal bonds, treasury bonds, funds, and brokers.

**Datek Online** .....www.datek.com
Build your own portfolio using Datek's resources to make educated decisions. Service guarantees a 60-second execution, or the trade is free.

**EDGAR Online**.....www.edgar-online.com
Up-to-date financial reports on companies. Can look up Securities and Exchange Commission filings submitted as little as 24 hours ago.

**ETrade** .....www.etrade.com
ETrade investors can learn about companies, then build and manage their own stock portfolio.

**Hoover's Online**.....www.hoovers.com
Countless resources for financial research.
**Features** • 3,500 company profiles • SEC documents available in real time • daily financial headlines

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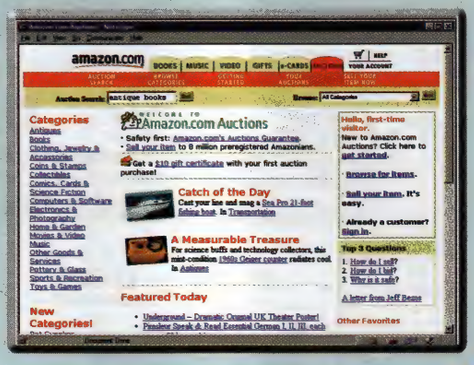
AMAZON.COM

# Amazing Auctions at Amazon.com

Adding to its impressive curriculum vitae, Amazon.com is jumping aboard the Internet-auction bandwagon. Not content to join the ranks of numerous underachieving auction sites, Amazon.com Auctions will impress even jaded auction addicts. Focusing on user-to-user auctions, the site features an extensive and always changing selection of items in categories from antiques to automotive, computers to comics. Buying and selling is incredibly easy, especially if you've bought books, CDs, or videos from Amazon before.

Amazon is working hard to make its auctions safe for both sellers and buyers. The company touts its "zero tolerance" of fraud and has a vigilant fraud-investigation staff. If a purchase does go awry—for instance, if an item is counterfeit, broken, or just doesn't arrive—buyers are protected by Amazon's Auctions Guarantee, which will reimburse you up to $250.

To keep abreast of interesting auctions, buyers can choose from a variety of newsletters that highlight sports memorabilia, collectibles, toys, and other notable items. And capping it all off with a philanthropic bent, the site periodically holds auctions in which proceeds go to worthy charities. ▼




**Ino.com**.....www.ino.com
A slick financial site devoted to futures and options trades.
**Features** • options chains • classified ads

**Quicken.com**.....www.quicken.com/small_business
Copious information for small-business owners.
**Features** • weekly columns and expert advice • business headlines • you can buy accounting software, stamps, and checks

SecureTax

**SecureTax**.....www.securetax.com
At SecureTax, you can prepare, electronically file, and print federal and state tax returns.

**StockMaster**.....www.stockmaster.com
StockMaster tells you the trading price and sundry details about any stock or investment fund, providing instant graphs of that stock's activity.

**Wall Street Research Net**.....www.wsrn.com
Offers thousands of links to help professional and private investors perform research on companies and mutual funds, and to locate important economic data.

## Online Auctions

**eBay**.....www.ebay.com
This auction site specializes in linking sellers and buyers of everything under the sun from computer equipment to collectible toys. With tens of thousands of hardware, software, and book auctions going on all the time, chances are you can find anything you need from ports for modern PCs to rare and obsolete computers. Registration is required before buying or selling at eBay. A feedback system allows you to tell if a seller has a reputation—good or bad.
**Features** • mind-boggling variety of products • all purchases up to $200 are insured
**Caveat** • sellers' honesty and reputations vary

**Egghead Auctions**.....www.surplusauction.com
Egghead Auctions (formerly called Surplus Auction) can be a great place to find a deal on computer hardware, software, and consumer products. The selection is limited but always changing.

**Onsale**.....www.onsale.com
A massive auction block for hardware and software, office and home products, sports and fitness equipment, and even vacation packages. Its computer category remains the best-stocked, offering daily and hourly auctions for PCs, Macs, and peripherals.

**ZDNet Auctions**.....auctions.zdnet.com
This auction site features nothing but computer hardware and software. Specific product categories allow you to find the type of product you are looking for.
**Features** • vast selection of computer product auctions • Auction Agent will notify you when a new auction meets your criteria

## Small-Business Resources

**National Payment Corp.**.....www.directdeposit.com
Provides direct-deposit services for small and medium-size businesses. Site can exchange data with more than two-dozen accounting software programs.

**Online Business Services**.....www.onlinepayroll.com
A flexible personnel-tracking system to help any business become more efficient and in some cases get better financial reports.

**PostOffice.Net**.....www.postoffice.net
Complete e-mail service including customer support for your business.
**Features** • personalized domain names • free customization options • mail forwarding

**SmartShip**.....www.smartship.com
SmartShip makes it easy to select a shipper. Tell it the weight and other details about your package, and the site helps you choose the best major carrier, whether your priority is speed or cost.

USA.NET

**USA.NET**.....www.usa.net
Commercial messaging service lets you send and receive e-mail from any Web browser.

**Virtual Payroll**.....www.virtualpayroll.com
Available in all 50 states, Virtual Payroll simplifies the cycle of payroll and taxes for small businesses.

## Travel and Leisure

**Biztravel**.....www.biztravel.com
Extensive trip-planning tools, plus special features and amenities for the frequent traveler.

**Cruise Web**.....www.cruiseweb.com
Eleven cruise lines from which to choose. Can look at itineraries based on destination or preferred cruise line.

**Easy Sabre**.....www.easysabre.com
Powerful computer reservation system.
**Features** • zoom in on the three lowest fares

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• receive tickets by mail or pick them up at a local travel agent • store frequent-flyer numbers and meal preferences
**Caveat** • unintuitive command interface

**Excite Travel**.....www.city.net
Copious information on just about any earthbound place you can name.
**Features** • frequent-flyer mileage minder • insider's guide to renting a car • restaurant-review finder

**Expedia**.....expedia.msn.com
Offers a vast travel network. Have to register as member, but there is no fee to do so.

**Flifo**.....www.flifo.com
A service you can use to examine airline schedules, rental-car options, and hotel availability. You can buy tickets, rent an auto, and book all of your accommodations.

Global Online Travel

**Global Online Travel**.....www.got.com
A diverse site that not only helps you find the best deal on airfare, but can help you find dinner once you arrive at your destination.

**Las Vegas Reservations System**.....www.lvrs.com
Lets shoppers price and book accommodations without a lot of calling around.

**itravel**.....www.itravel.com
Offers traditional travel options, plus a lot more—including a huge variety of specialty vacations, and a wide array of options in destinations and lodging.

**Preview Travel**.....www.previewtravel.com
This versatile site helps shoppers in the market for a vacation check out all their options and find some good deals.

**Travel Channel**.....www.travelchannel.com
Brought to us by the cable channel of the same name. Offers pointers to vacation-information sites, travel newsletters, television-program listings, and a chat area.

**Travelocity**.....www.travelocity.com
Provides secure online transactions for air, car, and hotel reservations, plus access to a vast database of travel information.

**TravelScape**.....www.travelscape.com
Simple trip-planning tools.
**Features** • vacation packages • no-risk reservation guarantee • around-the-clock customer service via telephone

**TravelWeb**.....www.travelweb.com
You can book your flight, rent a car, and find a hotel room, as well as visit the site's Traveler Resources area, check the weather, and print a map.

**Tripweb**.....www.tripweb.com
You can book your own airline, car, and hotel reservations with Tripweb. When you make an airline reservation, you are able to find out what type of aircraft you'll be on and even choose your seat. Before sending your ticket, a travel agent will review your reservation to make sure you've found the best possible fare.
**Features** • can request a cruise quote • $100,000 flight insurance on every airline ticket • free ticket delivery

**Yahoo Travel**.....travel.yahoo.com
Can research your next trip by destination, activity, or interest.

## Consumer Electronics

**Consumer Direct Warehouse**....www.consumer-direct.com
Provides a diverse selection of brands and styles in categories ranging from DVD players to devices such as microwave ovens and vacuum cleaners.

**Crutchfield**.....www.crutchfield.com
A place to visit whether you're interested in setting up a home theater or are in the market for a nifty car stereo.
**Features** • can search by product type or brand • online specials offer deep discounts • two-day delivery on all items

electronics.net

**electronics.net**.....www.electronics.net
The electronics.net site offers a gigantic catalog of merchandise. As the online division of an established retail business, this site has a great selection of appliances—from hair dryers to auto alarm systems, home-office necessities, and consumer-electronics items including audio and video equipment. Special orders are welcome, and online coupons are available.
**Features** • more than 200 brands are offered here • gift certificates are available
**Caveat** • shipping charges not calculated online

## Cameras

**Access Discount Camera**.....www.accesscamera.com
Access Discount Camera features an online catalog of more than 10,000 photo products, ranging from cameras to gadget bags to video cameras to binoculars.

camera.com

**camera.com**.....www.camera.com
A comprehensive site offering traditional point-and-shoot cameras as well as digital cameras, video cameras, and even slide projectors.

**KEH Camera Brokers**.....www.keh.com
A handy resource for photographers, KEH Camera Brokers peddles new items as well as good-condition used equipment from major manufacturers. For owners of older cameras, the site is an excellent source for hard-to-find accessories.

**Ritz Camera Centers**.....www.ritzcamera.com
In addition to the latest cameras and accessories, Ritz Camera Centers sells photo albums and frames. The site also offers online photo screening services.

## Active Gear

**Eddie Bauer**.....www.eddiebauer.com
In addition to its diverse selection of sporty clothing for men and women, Eddie Bauer's Web shop offers gear ranging from telescopes to diaper bags to furniture.

**Lands' End**.....www.landsend.com
Fans of Lands' End will like the catalog's online presence. This easy-to-navigate Web site lets shoppers outfit the entire family for any season. You can find great bargains here as well: The unique Counter area is updated once a week, and the discounts get better every two days until the merchandise is gone.
**Features** • luggage • bed and bath items • overstock area offers great deals
**Caveat** • site's search function excludes any sale merchandise

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**L.L. Bean .....www.llbean.com**
Shoppers looking for anything from fly rods to infant-size snow boots will be well-served by this expansive site. The Catalog Quickshop facilitates swift ordering for those who have already perused the print L.L. Bean catalog and made their choices offline.

**REI.....www.rei.com**
A diverse selection including everything from vehicle racks to casual dresses. The outlet area offers fantastic prices on various name-brand merchandise.

## Books and Music

**Amazon.com .....amazon.com**
Featured site this month. See p. 132.

**Barnes and Noble.....www.barnesandnoble.com**
With millions of titles in its easy-to-search catalog, Barnes and Noble's site is a book-lover's dream. If the book you want is out of print, don't despair: It may be available through Barnes and Noble's association with used-book sellers across the country.
**Features** • extraordinary library of in-print books • may be able to locate out-of-print books • easy to search

CDNow

**CDNow.....www.cdnow.com**
CDNow started selling compact discs on the Internet before "e-commerce" was part of the national lexicon. Its online store started years ago with a low-tech telnet connection, but has grown with the times—this mega-site now offers an extensive catalog of titles. Many discs have RealAudio sound clips and reviews. Once it learns your musical taste, the Album Advisor will point you to other bands you're likely to enjoy.
**Features** • huge catalog of CDs, tapes, and vinyl • you can check out cover art • personalized music recommendations

**K-TEL.....www.ktel.com**
The words "as seen on TV" pretty much sum up K-TEL. The company that brought us commercials for the Bacon Krisper and Veg-O-Matic kitchen gadgets, not to mention countless party tapes, is now "as seen on the Web." You can choose from a variety of compilation CDs or create your own CD, mixing and matching from K-TEL's vast catalog of artists. You won't find an offer like that on TV. The site's new auction section offers an eclectic selection of user-to-user auctions.
**Features** • create your own CD for $10 • $3 CDs in the bargain bin

**Music Boulevard.....www.musicblvd.com**
Your music tastes may be strictly classical or amazingly eclectic—either way, this site has CDs and vinyl to suit them. You can search for a favorite artist and view a list of available CDs. Then hear song samples and read reviews. The Music Boulevard site can also help you discover other music you'll love by listing related groups and musicians that influenced your favorite artists.
**Features** • music news and gossip • import CDs and vinyl • purchases earn frequent-flyer miles

**Powell's Books.....www.powells.com**
Book-lovers know Powell's as the independently owned mega-store in Portland, Ore. You can check out Powell's renowned selection of new and used books at its Web store. Shoppers can search by title, author, ISBN, or keyword. Browse through the staff picks and recommendation center for more great reads.
**Features** • rare books • online reading group ▼


What's On The Computer Shopper Show?

What, Where, and How to Buy...

AIRTIMES: TUESDAY & THURSDAY AT 9AM EST, SATURDAY & SUNDAY AT 9AM & 4PM EST

- Performance PCs
- Home networking
- ADSL vs. cable modems
- Voice recognition
- Free PCs
- GPS & mapping
- Flat panels vs. CRTs
- Photo editors
- Value PCs / College PCs
- Hard drives
- Power strips vs. UPSs
- Contact managers

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Topics subject to change.

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